Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-11 (canceled).

Claim 12 (currently amended): An apparatus for permitting or preventing the flow of gas to a burner having a cooking grill, comprising:

a. a valve having an open and shut position and biased in said shut position;

b. a pivot proximate to said valve;

b. a plunger proximate to said pivot for operating said valve;

c. a valve actuator arm connected to said pivot and in operative contact with said plunger for moving said plunger, wherein said valve actuator arm extends toward the burner;

d. an actuator member having a first position and a second position and connected to said valve actuator arm, wherein said actuator member comprises a substantially flat surface for receiving a cooking utensil;

e. wherein said actuator member is inclined in said first position and movement of said actuator member moves said valve actuator arm to actuate said plunger and operate said valve.

Claim 13 (canceled).

Claim 14 (previously presented): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said actuator member is substantially horizontal in said second position.

Claim 15 (previously presented): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said actuator member contacts the cooking grill in said second position.

Claim 16 (previously presented): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein downward movement of said actuator member moves said valve actuator arm to actuate said plunger and open said valve.

Claim 17 (previously presented): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said actuator member comprises a substantially circular ring for receiving the cooking utensil.

Claim 18 (previously presented): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said valve is laterally separated from the burner.

Claim 19 (previously presented): The apparatus of Claim 12, further including a spring in contact with said valve actuator arm for biasing said valve actuator arm away from said plunger.

Claim 20 (previously presented): The apparatus of Claim 12, wherein said plunger is biased away from said valve.

Claim 21 (previously presented): The apparatus of Claim 12, where said valve actuator arm extends beneath the burner.

Claim 22 (previously presented): A method for permitting and preventing the flow of gas to a burner of a gas grill comprising:

a. providing a valve having an open and shut position with a plunger for actuating said valve;

b. biasing said valve in said shut position;

c. connecting a valve actuator arm to said plunger;

d. connecting an actuator member to said valve actuator arm;

e. inclining said actuator member for receiving a cooking utensil;

f. permitting the flow of gas to the burner when the cooking utensil is placed on said actuator member; and

g. preventing the flow of gas to the burner when the cooking utensil is removed from said actuator member.

Claim 23 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, further including moving said actuator member downward to permit the flow of gas to the burner.

Claim 24 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, further including locating said valve laterally separate from the burner.

Claim 25 (previously presented): The method of Claim 22, further including biasing said plunger away from said valve.

Claim 26 (currently amended): A method for permitting and preventing the flow of gas to a burner of a gas grill comprising:

a. providing a valve having an open and shut position with a plunger for actuating said valve;

b. biasing said valve in said shut position;

c. connecting a valve actuator arm to said plunger;

d. connecting an actuator member having a substantially flat surface to said valve actuator arm;

e. permitting the flow of gas to the burner when a cooking utensil is placed on said actuator member;

f. inclining said actuator member for receiving the cooking utensil; and

~~f.~~g. preventing the flow of gas to the burner when the cooking utensil is removed from said actuator member.

Claim 27 (canceled).

Claim 28 (previously presented): The method of Claim 26, further including moving said actuator member downward to permit the flow of gas to the burner.

Claim 29 (previously presented): The method of Claim 26, further including moving said actuator member upward to prevent the flow of gas to the burner.

Claim 30 (previously presented): The method of Claim 26, further including locating said valve laterally separate from the burner.

Claim 31 (previously presented): The method of Claim 26, further including biasing said plunger away from said valve.